

Columbia, SC

Feb. 07, 1812

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EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ONE OF THE PROFESSORS OF COLUMBIA
COLLEGE, TO HIS FRIEND IN CHARLESTON

Columbia, S.C., Feb. 11

Earthquakes have become almost familiar here; we had a shock this evening - that on Friday morning did some slight injury - . Our young men generally have taken sleeping rooms out of College; and those who remain keep watch alternately, which I think a prudent precaution. I imagine that we shall learn that the whole Continent has been agitated; at least North America.

Columbia, S.C., Feb. 11

Ever since the 16th of December last the earth has appeared unsettled, and in almost constant tremor, and shocks of earthquakes are frequently felt with more or less severity. At a quarter before five o'clock in the evening of Tuesday last, a smart shock was felt; and about half past three on Friday morning, it was followed by one that far exceeded in severity anything of the kind heretofore experienced here. It continued with considerably severity for about two minutes, but the motion did not entirely subside, under ten or fifteen. It shook off the top of one of the College Chimnies, threw down the part of an inside wall in one of the Professor's houses; and partially affected other buildings. This terrible shaking of the earth excited the terror and alarm of every thinking mind; many took fright and ran into the street just as they left their beds. In the early part of the night following two slight shocks were felt, which so alarmed the inhabitants of the place that they would not venture to bed at all, and those that did, slept in their clothes.